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Previews of Works For Sale at Upcoming Shows

WESTERN ART

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Grand Views: Darcie Peet
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Lost Clouds and Wildflowers, oil, 30 x 30"

GRAND VIEWS

Arizona painter Darcie Peet is exploring the beauty of North America one epic destination at a time.

BY MICHAEL CLAWSON



Touches of Sunrise, oil, 48 x 24"



Sunrise Scarlet, oil, 34 x 34"



Dawn Drapes Yei Bi Chei, oil, 30 x 30"

If Darcie Peet were to put a pin in every part of the country she's painted, she would have a worthless map and a very nice pin collection.

The Rockies, Texas Hill Country, Canyon de Chelly, California Wine Country, Monument Valley, the Wind River Range, Glacier National Park, Alaska, the Canadian Rockies—her list of painting destinations is vast. The list even goes east, to places few Western artists venture. Places like Grand Marais, Minnesota.

"What keeps me going? I think it's my love of exploring the outdoors," she says. "If I can

be outdoors it changes everything completely. It's the adventure, the journey, the finding of those quintessential moments in these wonderful places."

Peet has been a steady force in the art world for many years. Her subjects are as diverse as her destinations: she paints snow-covered peaks, desert spires shooting into the sky, mountain meadows with babbling streams, alpine lakes with emerald waters, cactus-lined valleys and bleached cliff faces. Boil her work down further, though, and it is a study of light within nature. Peet has a way of capturing the vibrancy of the light so effectively that her

paintings don't just evoke the images of a place, but also the warmth of the sunlight as it rakes across her paint.

"I really feel that it all relies on observation and experiences and being there. I'm out three to five days a week, either hiking any number of canyons near me or, if I'm struggling with the light, I will go out on my bike just to look, observe and educate myself," Peet says. "All of the places I go I experience deeply. That's just the way I work."

Peet spends so much time in nature that she's even had close encounters with grizzlies and other animals, a hazard of being a painter





Jet Trails Across Legend,
oil, 20 x 30"

who relies on the true wilderness. "I love the Canadian Rockies, and it's probably my favorite place to paint," she says. "The only drawback exploring the Canadian Rockies are grizzly bears. We have been so lucky, because we've been in country on some narrow trails that we've had to turn back on several times, but never had any bad run-ins."

Peet began exploring art as a young child, and never turned back. In a recent discussion at the Tucson Museum of Art, she recounted one of her first art experiences. "The first day of school was truly special as I opened the top of my desk and inside was always a brand new box of eight crayons. *Unbroken*. That was important," she said. "I colored and colored and colored as a youngster, in school and at home." Her first art education was in college, where she took studio drawing and painting, and then after graduation she taught art for a year before going into graphic design, advertising and interior decorating. She bounced around for a little bit, until an opportunity arose.

"A major turning point, a fellow artist convinced me to submit to *Salon International*, which had to be in oil. So why not...even though I had painted in acrylic in college and years after...*I had grown up painting in oil*," she recounts, adding that she submitted a work inspired by a ridge in the Santa Catalina Mountains in Southern Arizona. "After several weeks I received a call. The piece had been purchased by the Pierce Museum in Corsicana, Texas, and I was also invited to join Greenhouse Gallery in San Antonio. From then on it was back to oil only."

These days Peet is represented by Settlers West Gallery in Tucson, Arizona; K Newby Gallery & Sculpture Garden in Tubac, Arizona; Broadmoor Galleries in Colorado Springs, Colorado; A. Banks Gallery in Missoula, Montana; and ArtzLine, the online gallery. Her work can be seen frequently all around the country, as can Peet, who still travels as much as she can so she can be inspired by nature and its light.

"These days I'm never satisfied with a painting, but that's how it goes because it's always a journey, and my work will continue to grow and to change, and I will keep on stepping up the ladder," she says. "That's part of the adventure." ☺